

NETWORKING THE COMMANDER AND JOINT BATTLE STAFF OF A JOINT TASK FORCE

A Monograph
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Infantry



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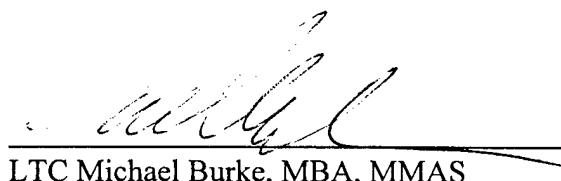
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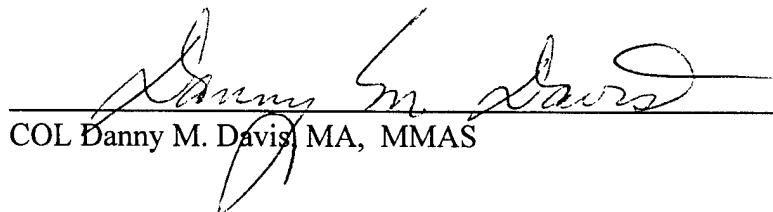
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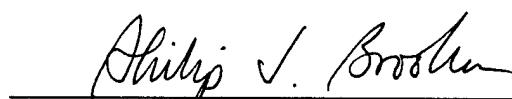
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ABSTRACT

NETWORKING THE COMMANDER AND JOINT BATTLE STAFF OF A JOINT
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This monograph examines the problem of decoupling between the commander and joint battle staff of a joint task force, and its antidote , networking. Effective networking between the commander and staff enables both the commander and joint staff to appraise the current operational theater and forecast the future theater for the command. Effective networking of the commander and joint battle staff is achieved through a shared image of the joint area of operations. This shared image is achieved by the integration of the staff through teamwork and an interactive flow of information within the joint command post. The achievement of mutual situational awareness of the joint area of operations reduces the amount of uncertainty confronting both the commander and staff when making decisions in the execution of joint operations. As a result, the JTF commander and staff can then focus combat power effectively to accomplish assigned missions.

Interactive information flow, teamwork and team decision making offer a solution to the problem of decoupling between the commander and battle staff of a joint task force. Through the use of teamwork and interactive information flow, an ad hoc organization like a JTF can avoid operational failure and missed opportunities as the commander and staff become networked through a shared image of the operational theater.

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I. INTRODUCTION

“The probable use of a joint force in today’s myriad of contingency situations seem to be increasing almost daily. One of the major challenges facing the joint task force commander remains in the command and control arena.”

John H. Cushman
Lieutenant General , US Army Retired
Military Review , July 1990

Since the Napoleonic era, the commander’s battle staff has evolved and has taken on an increased role in exercising command and control in military operations. The complexity of modern warfare no longer allows the commander to singularly exercise both command and control in military operations. The battle staff has evolved as that element which assists the commander in exercising control during military operations. This aspect of the battle staff is also characteristic of joint staff operations today. The joint task force commander relies on his battle staff to provide him with an image of the area of operations. This image enables the joint commander to focus combat power and achieve operational leverage on the modern battlefield.

Command and control is the term used to describe those actions by a commander on the modern battlefield to “assimilate thousands of bits of information to visualize the battlefield, assess the situation, and direct the military action required to achieve victory.”¹ Simply put, to command is to direct. It serves as the primary means in which the commander conveys his vision and intent to the unit. “Command means visualizing the current and future state of friendly and enemy forces and then formulating concepts of operation to accomplish the mission.”² Command has two vital components; decision making and leadership. “Decision making is knowing if to decide, then when and what to decide, while leadership is taking responsibility for those decisions, directing forces and resources, establishing a teamwork climate that engenders success and providing a vision that focuses and anticipates future events.”³ Control is inherent in command. A commander uses this

capability with the assistance of his staff to regulate forces and allocate resources consistent with his intent.

The need for flexibility in command is greatest for a committed joint force commander. Flexibility is afforded the joint commander through the exercise of control. Control provides structure and focuses the commander's efforts in achieving his vision. Control monitors and establishes limits in order to provide structure. Primarily, its purpose is to deal with uncertainty inherent in operations.⁴ Control serves to compensate or correct command. The most common means of exercising control is through a high volume of routine communications between a commander, battle staff and subordinate elements.

Military operations have also evolved. Reductions in the US armed forces and increased challenges to national security have caused our nation to develop means through which our nation can respond quickly and decisively around the globe to maintain stability. Today's operations require projecting and sustaining military power over vast distances to maintain stability and deterrence worldwide. To accomplish this, US Armed Forces are melded together into adaptable force packages (Joint Task Forces, or JTFs) to meet these various operational requirements.

Adaptable force packages are assembled out of service components, mixing and matching capabilities to create a joint force capable of accomplishing the assigned mission. This assembled joint force almost always is a temporary formation and does not have a permanent staff. As a result, ad hoc battle staffs are assembled and assigned to support the joint task force commander. Due to the impromptu nature of forming this command and staff element, it is difficult to create cohesive, integrated teams capable of developing a shared image of the theater of operations. The ability to share an image of the theater is critical to success.

“A battlefield that was no wider than one commander's field of vision has long been relegated to the past.”⁵ Today's battlefield is characterized by complexity. This complexity requires the commander to exercise command by visualizing the theater of operations. Visualization is a

cognitive conceptualization by the commander of friendly and enemy forces, terrain and weather in relation to time, space and intent. It is through visualizing the battlefield that the commander is able to communicate an image of what is to be accomplished by the assigned service units to both the JTF staff and assembled joint force. The joint battle staff is that element within the organization which helps the commander create and refine the battlefield image. The staff accomplishes this task by processing, analyzing, monitoring and refining the incoming flow of information into the command post. As the image is developed and shared by the commander and staff, it becomes the common reference point from which mutual situational awareness of the area of operations is achieved. Thus, the information available is processed by the staff into an image of the theater which enables the commander to see the battlefield and make decisions which ensure mission success.

The complexity of the modern battlefield requires that staffs be able to acquire, process and share complex and often confusing information flowing in from various sources in order to develop and support the commander's image of the battlefield.⁶ A shared image of the battlefield provides a medium through which the staff operating systems and functions are interconnected with the commander's vision of the battlefield. This interconnection of commander's vision and staff operating systems allows the establishment of a network of interconnecting lines of communication within the command structure. Thus, the commander and staff are said to be "networked" when each shares the same image of the area of operations and acts accordingly .

Since each member of the battle staff receives information principally through their respective functional operating system, it is essential that this information be shared across staff functions in order to attain a truly shared image of the area of operations and thus remain networked with the commander. Dr. Kahan's research study, Understanding Commander's Information Needs, states it clearly... "Because no information can be understood apart from its contextual frame, the

value of any particular piece of information cannot be determined out of context".⁷ Thus, the sharing and integrating of information in a relatively continuous exchange among staff members facilitates interactive information flow and image resolution of the operational theater.

Interactive information flow is one in which the passage of information is accomplished by feedback for assessment and understanding.⁸ Interactive information flow within a command structure is characterized by the free lateral, vertical and horizontal flow of information within the headquarters elements while simultaneously allowing each battle staff member to understand staff interrelationships. Thus, the interactive flow of information is not the traditional linear flow "in which the subordinate supplies the commander with information and the commander in turn supplies the subordinate with decisions."⁹

Teamwork among the members of the joint battle staff provides the environment within which interactive information flow and shared mutual situational awareness may occur. "There is no greater military contribution to national security than an effective and efficient fighting force. An effective and efficient force is built on teamwork."¹⁰ Teamwork is a set of activities performed through a "cooperative effort by members of a team to achieve a common goal."¹¹ The use of the model for team decision making by a JTF battle staff will facilitate the seamless linking of joint military capabilities and thus reduce the chances for failure in the execution of joint operations. Finally, the incorporation of this concept in a JTF headquarters facilitates the networking of the JTF commander with his joint battle staff.

The ability of the joint battle staff to operate as a team in the command post is the key to effective command and control. Effective team decision making insures that critical information received in the command post is shared and analyzed across functions as opposed to being compartmentalized into the functional service operating systems. This cross-fertilization of information by the joint battle staff refines the commander's image of the theater of operations and gives him the ability to reduce the level of uncertainty confronting the joint task force in an already

complex environment. Once the commander has a clear image of the theater, he is able to communicate that image to his subordinates...an action which does more to ensure mission accomplishment than almost anything else.

Command posts of a newly organized JTF are frequently unprepared to address developing situations on the battlefield due to the lack of teamwork and interactive sharing of critical information. Consequently, key information is overlooked and the recognition of emergency situations and operational opportunities lags behind the impact of the actual events. This organizational dysfunctionality prevents the JTF commander and battle staff from developing a shared image of the operational theater and effectively focusing joint combat power. The linkage of interactive information flow and mutual situational awareness between the JTF commander and joint battle staff is the means through which networking is achieved.

Today, joint battle staffs are faced with the challenge of receiving, analyzing and monitoring a vast quantity of information from which they are expected to develop a common relative picture of the area of operation for the commander. Because of the nature of its creation, " a JTF staff is the sum of its members' individual experiences in the joint arena... At worst , it is a group that never worked together."¹² As a result, JTF battle staffs are often at a disadvantage when attempting to develop a shared image of the operational theater with the commander. Due to the nature of modern warfare, the commander and joint battle staff can ill afford a "hi - low" mix of shared images. A hi - low mix of shared images is caused by an interruption in the flow of information between the commander and staff. This interruption results in an incomplete picture of the battlefield. Under these conditions, the commander and staff views are divergent and are thus said to be "decoupled" in their efforts to exercise command and control.

This decoupling of the JTF commander and staff can easily result in operational failure and missed opportunities. Previous battle staff studies and monographs have addressed this issue as an information management problem with emphasis on information overload. Specifically, these

studies evaluated the types of information to be received and recommended a list of critical information requirements. These critical information requirements were then recommended as the mechanism through which information could be managed and used to gain greater mutual situational awareness of the battlefield. Although these lists were insightful, they lacked consensus and did little to solve this dilemma.

So how does the commander and joint battle staff of a JTF become networked? The key is in the linkages. The use of interactive information flow during planning and execution facilitates the development of mutual situational awareness and serves as a common point of reference between the commander and staff for decision making. Additionally, the joint battle staff must be able to operate as a team. Each joint staff component must be linked in their efforts as a staff when focusing joint military capabilities. This is accomplished through interactive information flow and teamwork. Thus, once the joint staff is selected it must be trained in and use team decision making to attain efficient interoperability of the joint force assembled.

The purpose of this monograph is to examine the problem of decoupling between the commander and joint battle staff of a joint task force, and its antidote, networking. Effective networking between the commander and staff enables both the commander and joint staff to appraise the current operational theater and forecast the future theater for the command. Effective networking of the commander and joint battle staff is achieved through a shared image of the joint area of operations. This shared image is achieved by the integration of the staff through teamwork and an interactive flow of information within the joint command post. The achievement of mutual situational awareness of the joint area of operations reduces the amount of uncertainty confronting both the commander and staff when making decisions in the execution of joint operations. As a result, the JTF commander and staff can then focus combat power effectively to accomplish assigned missions.

ASSUMPTIONS

This monograph is based on a number of assumptions. First, a JTF will continue to be created to respond to missions requiring a response to a crisis. Second, force reductions and budget constraints will preclude the establishment of standing JTFs within unified commands. Third, when authorized by the NCA (National Command Authority) to respond to a crisis, unified commanders will continue to establish JTFs around a core component organization within their command. Fourth, the basic organizational structure of functional areas (i.e. J-1 through J-8) on the joint battle staff will remain unchanged. Fifth, human interaction within the joint battle staff is a natural facet of command post operations and will remain so even with the introduction of new command and control technologies.

SCOPE

This monograph examines the command and staff team of a joint task force. Specifically, it considers the interactive process of the staff and the information it manages in developing a shared image of the battlefield. The use of an evolutionary perspective of recent joint task force operations serves as a foundation from which a continued trend of decoupling in command and control in joint operations may be illustrated. More importantly, it illustrates the operational failures and missed opportunities which occur as a result of decoupling between the commander and his staff. The objective is to offer a solution to this command and control issue in order to assist future JTF commanders and staffs in developing that mutual situational awareness necessary for focusing joint military capabilities decisively on the modern battlefield.

II FORMING THE JOINT TASK FORCE

"As the U. S. force structure continues to shrink, JTFs become more important for their ability to ensure that all of the required capabilities for the mission are gathered together in one place. With shrinking forces, JTFs, will become not only a force enhancer, but a basic necessity for mission accomplishment."

Col Ellertson
Forming the Joint Task Force
HQ USEUCOM, Briefing 11 Mar 93

" A JTF is established when the mission has a specific limited objective and does not require overall centralized control of logistics."¹³ The mission assigned to the JTF usually requires that two or more services be integrated together as an inter-service team. Doctrinally, a JTF may consist of the four service components (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine) as well as a joint special operations and joint psychological operations task force.¹⁴ Each component or task force has its own commander who reports to the Commander Joint Task Force (CJTF) for operational tasking. The CJTF is supported by a joint battle staff configured along a standard staff organization. The majority of this staff comes from the designated CJTF's regular staff; however, a significant augmentation of officers from the other services will be assigned to round out the staff to make it joint.¹⁵ The augmentees to the JTF battle staff are normally assigned from other theater components to provide the staff with service integration. Unfortunately (and usually), many of these staff members have never worked together before and their understanding of joint military operations is often insufficient to coordinate everyday joint military actions.¹⁶

Once a crisis develops in the area of responsibility of a unified commander, that command's respective joint staff begins crisis action planning. Within the initial planning period, a warning order will be issued to the unified command from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff allocating forces to the unified commander for resolving the crisis. It is important to note that the JTF may or may not be created until after a course of action has been selected. In the situation when a course of action has already been selected, decoupling may begin to occur between the JTF

commander and staff. This decoupling occurs because “little input is provided to the unified commander from the command structure of the newly formed JTF.”¹⁷ In many instances both the JTF commander and battle staff find themselves meeting the joint force on the move. Additionally, “the JTF staff is unfamiliar with the situation”¹⁸ and thus unable to achieve mutual situational awareness. This initial lack of connectivity within the JTF command structure leads to missed opportunities and operational failure.

Joint Publication 5-00.2 states “the CJTF may organize his joint staff as he considers necessary to carry out his duties and responsibilities.”¹⁹ The composition and size of the JTF headquarters may be influenced by the location and facilities available to support the JTF command structure. For instance, the establishment of a JTF headquarters on board a navy ship will have a major influence on how the JTF battle staff is designed and what it can accomplish. Doctrinally each JTF headquarters should consist of force modules designed to provide the CJTF with basic command and joint battle staff elements primarily manned from within the superior commander’s headquarters and service component augmentation.²⁰

The JTF headquarters force module is usually composed of five major elements: command and joint staff, augmentation detachments, communications support, headquarters support and sustainment and security support. The command and staff element consists of the command section and functional and special staff elements.²¹ Augmentation detachments are assigned to enhance the headquarters capability in technical and specialized areas such as civil and mortuary affairs. The communications element is designed to provide the JTF headquarters with the necessary joint communications sources necessary to communicate between the other services and national joint headquarters. The headquarters and sustainment element provides administrative and logistic support for the JTF headquarters. Finally, security support is integrated into the headquarters to provide security depending on current threat assessment.

The JTF battle staff functions much like other military staffs, except that it is composed of members from each of the four services (and it may also include USCG and other governmental agencies). The collective staff performs a number of important functions. The joint battle staff's primary function is to assist the CJTF in directing, controlling and coordinating the operation of assigned forces and subordinate component commands.²² Additionally, the joint battle staff develops and plans courses of action and orders based on the CJTF's decisions and coordinates with outside governmental and non-governmental agencies involved in the operation. Finally, the joint battle staff collects, analyzes and monitors information for the accomplishment of the commander's intent and operational vision.²³

The commander of the JTF often designates a deputy commander to assist him in the discharge of his duties as commander. This position is presented in joint doctrine as part of the JTF organizational wiring diagram. However, current joint doctrine does not provide any functional description of this position and leaves the duties to be performed up to the desires of the JTF commander. This position provides the CJTF with greater flexibility in exercising command and control and has proven beneficial in recent joint operations.

The Chief of Staff is the principal staff officer assistant and advisor to the JTF commander and thus coordinates and directs the actions of the joint battle staff.²⁴ When authorized, the chief of staff represents the CJTF on JTF operational matters. Additionally, the chief of staff insures that proper liaison is established with supporting commands, governmental agencies, non-governmental agencies and host nation representatives as required.

Although not part of the joint headquarters, previous joint operations have shown that qualified liaison officers (LNOs) contribute significantly to mission success.²⁵ The joint battle staff must receive, monitor and assess incoming information to effectively focus joint combat power. The LNOs, distributed throughout the task force, ensure that actions are not accomplished in isolation from the other service components.²⁶ Liaison requirements should be identified early in the

planning process to avoid service compartmentalization and operational decoupling. Liaison should be established between higher, lower, and adjacent commands as well as with governmental and non-governmental agencies involved in the operation. Each LNO must be integrated into the joint battle staff “as their individual services are crucial to providing their commanders’ desires and policies to key staff members who will then integrate them into the JTF operational concept.”²⁷ Finally, LNOs must be knowledgeable about their elements’ capabilities and limitations as without which they are unable to effectively share and integrate the necessary information required for maintaining mutual situational awareness within the joint task force.

There are three options for forming the headquarters of a JTF. These are a standing JTF headquarters, composite (or ad hoc), and building on a service component. During this period of force reduction and declining military budgets, forming a standing JTF headquarters is beyond the means of the unified commands. The large manning requirements, anticipated missions and broad geographic focus in each unified command make it impracticable to establish a standing JTF.²⁸ Forming an ad hoc or composite JTF headquarters also has several disadvantages. This option makes advanced planning, preparation and training extremely difficult. Additionally, it is very difficult to develop any degree of cohesion or sense of “teamness”²⁹ among the members of the organization in a short period of time. This leaves the use of a core component as the most feasible of the alternatives. In this case, the predominant service component provides a permanent headquarters structure around which a JTF headquarters is built. Even though this method uses an existing headquarters to create the JTF, the headquarters is not truly joint until a significant augmentation package of sister service officers is added. The resulting JTF headquarters and staff created by this method retains a substantial degree of ad-hocery in its nature.

The core approach has the key advantage of providing a more stable base within which many personalities are known and staff operating procedures need not be invented.³⁰ This method also builds on the existing relationship between the commander and staff of the component

organization. The additional joint staff members from the other service components added to the JTF provide service expertise for joint operations. The core method also provides smaller elements for training and it possesses personnel and equipment readily available for rehearsals which the other options do not. Finally, the service component option is the “only affordable, supportable and flexible option available to the unified commander.”³¹

Even though the service component core is the most affordable and flexible option available to the unified commander, it is not without its disadvantages. The JTF formed under this option is “inherently disadvantaged by the lack of other services representation.”³² As such, the core component tends to emphasize its respective service perspective in developing operations. Staff augmentation is added to attain true jointness. Additionally, because of the inter-service nature of this newly formed organization new procedures and sometimes unfamiliar doctrine must be learned.³³

Until recently, the service component core was responsible for providing approximately 51% of the joint battle staff for the JTF headquarters.³⁴ However, experience has proven that the service component providing the core organization for the JTF could not effectively resource both service component and joint battle staffs and function properly. Consequently, each component is now responsible for providing an equal share of service representation on the JTF battle staff. As a result, the JTF battle staff tends to be an ad hoc organization with personnel who have never worked together before .

Three unified commands (USEUCOM, USPACOM and USACOM) involved in JTF operations have designed staff augmentation methods to reduce the adverse effects caused by ad hoc organizations. Each approach attempts to gain the correct mix of joint staff officers by providing augmentation cells to fill missing elements within the JTF staff structure.

USEUCOM provides augmentation by providing selected officers from either the unified staff or from the other service components. These augmentees are ”then integrated into a single,

cohesive staff providing the CJTF the means to plan, direct and assess the results of JTF operations.”³⁵ The objective is to attain a balanced augmentation by the unified command and its service components. The USEUCOM augmentation cell consists of a deputy commander (DCJTF) / chief of staff, joint operations center (JOC) team, joint operations planning execution (JOPES) cell, planning and political / military cell, communications planning team, Joint Universal Lessons Learned System (JULLS) team, public affairs team and a logistics cell. The DCG or chief of staff provides the CJTF with access to the USEUCOM staff process and a direct link to the unified command. The JOC is designed to provide the JTF with a knowledgeable element in USEUCOM battle staff procedures. The JOPES cell provides the JTF with access to the JOPES ADP while the planning and political cell provides the CJTF with advice concerning policy and political implications of planned actions. The communications cell provides a direct communications link to the unified headquarters. The public affairs team becomes the foundation for the joint information bureau (JIB) responsible for keeping those outside the JTF organization informed on JTF military activities. The logistics team provides the JTF with a direct link into the EUCOM theater logistics system while the JULLS cell provides the CJTF with the ability to document lessons learned. The end result is “a JTF staff that links smoothly with HQ USEUCOM.”³⁶

Although the USPACOM and USACOM approaches are similar to each other, there are significant differences in each approach. Both unified commands infuse joint operational planning cells into the JTF headquarters structure once the JTF is designated. The primary purpose of these planning cells is to provide smooth transition and operational continuity within the newly formed joint headquarters. The planning cell from USPACOM is called the PACOM operational planning cell / team (OPC).³⁷ This planning cell is composed of inter - service members from J3/1 and J5/4 who have been intimately involved in the operational crisis planning for which the JTF has been established. Upon activation of the JTF, the OPC is infused into the JTF battle staff with additional joint service augmentees to round out the JTF staff. It is important to note that this cell with the

augmentees works directly for the CJTF once assigned and ties are severed with the unified command.³⁸ USACOM supplements the JTF headquarters with a similar planning cell known as the Deployable Joint Task Force Augmentation Cell (DJTFAC). The DJTFAC is designed to provide the JTF command structure with assistance in joint warfighting during planning.³⁹ Like the PACOM OPC, the DJTFAC is involved in the initial crisis planning and serves as that operational transition element between the unified command and the newly formed JTF. Specifically, the cell “provides responsive joint staff expertise in crisis and normal planning situations to USCINCLANT and a designated JTF.”⁴⁰

Unlike the PACOM OPC, the DJTFAC of USACOM does not become a part of the JTF joint battle staff. The DJTFAC remains a separate planning entity for responding to the operational staff needs of the JTF when needed. This planning cell also assists in the planning and preparation of future operations as well as providing recommendations on the synchronization of combat power from assigned and supporting forces.⁴¹ The DJTFAC is composed of two teams ,Team A and Team B. Team A consists of members from USCINCLANT’s joint staff which have been actively involved in crisis planning, while Team B consists of individual staff officers from the service components with specialized joint warfighting talents.⁴² As a result of this structural design, the DJTFAC is an ad hoc organization and does not fully integrate into the JTF joint battle staff. Thus, the DJTFAC is merely an operational staff conduit through which joint operational planning information flows between the JTF battle staff and the unified joint staff of USACOM.

The USEUCOM and USACOM augmentation models, in contrast to the PACOM OPC, do not facilitate the interactive flow of information within a JTF battle staff. These planning cells tend to operate as “directed telescopes”⁴³ for each of the regional unified commanders.⁴⁴ Even though these methods of augmentation add joint expertise to the JTF staff, they do not facilitate the networking of the JTF battle staff and commander. Each planning cell is organized and introduced into the JTF as an advisory cell on joint operations and is never fully integrated into the CJTF’s

joint battle staff. Consequently, due to the lack of interactive information flow between these augmentation cells and the JTF command structure, it is often difficult to achieve shared mutual situational awareness of the area of operations between the CJTF and JTF joint battle staff.

“Joint military doctrine presents the fundamental principles guiding the employment of military power to achieve strategic ends.”⁴⁵ It adequately describes the structural formation of the JTF and battle staff but, fails to describe how this assembled organization can overcome the decoupling effect caused by its ad hoc nature. Additionally, doctrine does not address the interactive flow of information within the JTF command structure. The lack of interactive information flow does not facilitate mutual situational awareness of the theater of operations and consequently contributes to the lack of connectivity between the JTF commander and battle staff. This problem is particularly evident when various members of the JTF headquarters are assembled from different service components by different methods.

Doctrine also mentions the concept of teamwork and the role it plays in developing an effective and efficient joint fighting force. The focus, however, is from the national perspective in that it views the integration of service functions as generating operational synergy resulting in an interoperable joint warfighting team. Doctrine does not describe teamwork as a characteristic of high performance staffs. This void in joint doctrine is the foundation for today’s problem of networking the commander and battle staff of a JTF.

Even though the current approach of developing a JTF around a core component is the most flexible and supportable option, the aforementioned deficiencies in joint doctrine must be addressed in order to network the commander and joint battle staff of a JTF. To make our joint task forces more cohesive and effective, we must address the disturbing shortcomings of interactive information flow and teamwork to ensure the effective and efficient use of joint combat power in the future.

The JTF is a valuable and powerful tool which has been used to achieve national strategic objectives in recent modern history. The examples of joint task force operations in the following

section will serve to illustrate a continuing trend in decoupling within the command and control of joint operations. A review of four recent joint task force operations by the United States Armed Forces lays the foundation for the introduction of the elements missing from current joint doctrine. Finally, “the ability to combine our forces into effective JTFs will be the key to our global military power for the foreseeable future.”⁴⁶

III JTFs : AN EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

“After a gestation period of nearly a decade, a fundamental shift in military thinking has finally taken hold: in the post -Cold War world, the JTF has become the hallmark of U. S. military operations.”

John G. Roos
Armed Forces Journal International
January 1993

“The challenge facing the American military is to sustain the size and readiness of its forces while reducing its budget.”⁴⁷ To meet this challenge the United States has established joint military task forces to protect vital national interests. During the last fifteen years United States military operations have been characterized by the use of JTFs with notable improvement each time the joint forces have been employed. This has occurred due to the hard and often costly lessons learned by our armed forces in conducting joint operations. This section will review and assess four of these recent joint operations to illustrate a deficient trend in command and control within a JTF. The four operations selected are Operation Eagle Claw, Operation Urgent Fury, Operation Just Cause and Operation Uphold Democracy. Each of these operations experienced a degree of operational failure or missed opportunities as a result of decoupling between the JTF commander and the joint battle staff. Finally, the historical assessment of these operations will serve as a foundation to introduce the following section on interactive information flow and teamwork.

OPERATION EAGLE CLAW: THE IRAN RESCUE MISSION

“ Of the military operations attempted by the United States between 1970 and 1984, none so clearly marked the decline of American military prestige and competence as the unsuccessful mission to rescue the fifty-three American hostages held in the U. S. embassy in Teheran.”⁴⁸ In November 1979, the American embassy in Teheran was seized by an element of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and its occupants held as hostage. Throughout the next several months, U. S. officials attempted to solve this crisis through diplomatic means. President Carter desired a peaceful

solution to the crisis without the use of military force.⁴⁹ During this same period a number of members of the Administration were recommending a military response to solve the crisis. Planning for a military response began in November, 1979, and forces were selected for the operation by December. From the beginning, the plan specified service separation of the JTF in different locations rather than assemble them at a single location. "At least two components trained at their normal assignment bases, so as not to raise suspicion" and by March 1980 final rehearsals for the rescue were completed.⁵⁰ The Joint Chiefs of Staff approved and recommended the plan to the President, who on the same day, April 16 1980, gave the execute order to rescue the hostages.⁵¹

On 24 April 1980, in the Iranian desert approximately 300 miles from the city of Teheran, members of JTF 1-79 were forced to abort their mission. COL. Charles A. Beckwith USA, the assault team commander within the JTF, made the decision to abort. This decision was made when only five of the eight rescue RH-53D helicopters made it to the initial rendezvous site (DESERT 1). A subsequent collision between one of these helicopters and an Air Force C130 refueler left eight servicemen dead and several others wounded in the desert. This operational failure clearly illustrates the effects which decoupling between members of a JTF battle staff and its commander can have on joint operations.

The decoupling of Operation Eagle Claw can be attributed to several factors which prevented the interactive flow of information and shared mutual situational awareness of the operation among the JTF's commander, battle staff and mission operators. These factors were the use of an ad hoc organization for operational planning, service compartmentalization, an over-emphasis on operational security, and the process used to make key operational decisions.

The JTF created for this operation was a completely ad hoc organization. The Joint Chiefs of Staff decided not to use an existing JTF organization, but instead chose to start, literally, from the beginning to establish a JTF.⁵² The resulting JTF battle staff was not a team but a collection of officers from the four major service components built around a small planning cell from the JCS

joint staff. Unfortunately, the assembled battle staff had no operational experience in joint operations and “the planning structure was so confused and bureaucratic as to make communication among its members difficult, and in some cases, almost impossible.”⁵³ Thus, the ad hoc nature of the battle staff did not facilitate the sharing of information among its members and consequently made it difficult if not impossible to create a battle staff team or a mutually shared image of the joint operation.

The second factor which contributed to the failure of this joint operation was the compartmentalization of service components within the JTF. Each component of the JTF “was so compartmentalized , in order to prevent security leaks , that no one had overall authority to check the components to ensure that they were capable of performing their missions” as a unified joint force. This decoupling between command , staff, and operators manifested itself in the areas of training and operational review prior to mission execution. In training , each component of the JTF trained and rehearsed their portions of the operation separately. The rehearsals conducted were piecemeal, with each unit focused on its own phase of the operation.⁵⁴ Additionally, there were no final rehearsals conducted nor “a thoroughly integrated training exercise of the entire joint task force for the final plan.”⁵⁵ The compartmentalization of effort in this joint operation prevented the JTF from gaining interactive information flow and mutual situational awareness of the operation. Finally, the compartmentalization of the JTF meant that the rescue plan was never subjected to testing or evaluation by the other services involved or a single authority to include the JTF commander to ensure mission success.⁵⁶

Extreme emphasis was placed on operational security (OPSEC). This over emphasis on OPSEC manifested itself in several areas which contributed to operational decoupling. The JTF battle staff planners seemed so concerned with the possibility that the plan might be discovered that they blocked communications within elements of their own planning staff. This resulted in the absence of an interactive flow and sharing of critical information which would have adverse impact

on the rescue force. For instance, security concerns in the planning staff kept the Air Force weather forecasters from sharing critical information with the battle staff and the rescuing helicopter pilots. Normally, the forecasters would brief the pilots prior to mission execution; however, for the Iran raid this practice was suspended.⁵⁷ Instead, a special intelligence officer was selected to brief the implications of weather on the mission to the pilots and he chose to ignore the dust storm predictions which eventually contributed to the decision to abort the mission. A second example of decoupling occurred in the battle staff as a result of information compartmentalization. In this instance key information about a road transiting the landing site (Desert 1) was known within the battle staff. This information was withheld and not shared within the deployed force, and as a result a rescue force C130 aircraft almost collided with an Iranian truck crossing the landing zone and compromised the mission.⁵⁸

Finally, the process in which operational decisions were made also led to operational decoupling and mission failure. A review by the Holloway Commission concluded that “a number of key decisions were made on the basis of interservice rivalry, bureaucratic consensus and political criteria rather than on operational requirements.”⁵⁹ It appears that there was an imperative to give each service a role in the operation at the sacrifice of operational soundness. The result was decoupling within the JTF and a joint operational failure which would haunt the military until its next opportunity in Grenada.

OPERATION URGENT FURY: THE INVASION OF GRENADA

In October 1983 the Reagan Administration became concerned with the instability of the island country of Grenada in the Caribbean Sea. The Administration viewed the presence of Cuban and Soviet military advisors in Grenada as a threat to U. S. national interests in that region. Two factors led to the invasion of Grenada by a U. S. joint task force. The U. S. feared the establishment of another Cuba and also feared the possibility of another Iran-like hostage crisis involving American medical students on the island.⁶⁰

For such a contingency, US Atlantic Command (USLANTCOM) had created a plan (OPLAN 2360) which dealt with a small island invasion scenario using the XVIII Airborne Corps as the JTF headquarters. Despite having this plan, the LANTCOM commander decided to disregard it and called for the creation of a new and separate JTF to accomplish the mission. JTF 120 was created and Vice Admiral Joseph Metcalf III, USN, was selected as the JTF commander. The JTF was augmented by a staff selected from the CJTF's Second Fleet staff. "Added to these fifteen members were augmentees from the Air Force, Army, CIA, and State Department."⁶¹ Under the original contingency plan the JTF battle staff would have had approximately 88 personnel; however, the shipboard headquarters location and short notice of activation resulted in the CJTF creating an ad hoc battle staff of 40 personnel with little previous experience as a joint team in ground and air operations.

On 25 October 1983, Joint Task Force 120 conducted simultaneous amphibious and airborne assaults on the Caribbean island of Grenada.⁶² JTF 120's mission was to rescue US medical students and restore stability to the nation of Grenada. As the joint operation unfolded a number of operational failures occurred as a result of decoupling within the JTF command structure. These operational failures were manifested in the fact that more US servicemen were lost as a result of accidents and friendly fire than by hostile action.⁶³

Although Operation Urgent Fury was a strategic success, it was characterized by instances of operational decoupling within the JTF command structure. The decoupling which occurred can be directly linked to the ad hoc joint headquarters charged with the planning and coordination of this joint operation. The JTF staff was created from staffs and units within the unified command which had never worked together before. The result was an assembled staff unfamiliar with the coordination of operational movement of ground forces and their fire support systems. Moreover, many staff officers were unfamiliar with planning airborne operations...a type of operation which would figure prominently into the concept.⁶⁴ Additionally, the JTF battle staff lacked the expertise

to develop a joint logistics plan necessary to support the operation. The lack of teamwork within the battle staff of JTF 120 as a joint staff manifested itself in several failures during the operation. These failures occurred in intelligence, logistics and movement of tactical forces.

The JTF battle staff failed to gain or develop intelligence about enemy dispositions, locations and strengths. The location of American citizens to be evacuated by joint forces was unknown, and maps of the region were not available for distribution to the units. This failure directly contributed to the desynchronization of joint operations. The lack of intelligence led to the damage of a civilian mental hospital vicinity Fort Frederic, since this facility did not appear on any of the maps being used to conduct the operation.⁶⁵ The lack of intelligence on the location of US citizens on the island resulted in the hasty and unplanned rescue of a second group of medical students located at a previously unknown campus further inland. Finally, because maps were not available, Marine forces conducted operations from British maps while Army units used ESSO tourist maps with self imposed grids to confirm locations and direct both air and artillery fires.

The absence of any joint logistics planning by the JTF battle staff also caused operational decoupling. There were no provisions for the cross-coordination of logistics between services, no prioritization of sustainment effort, no plan for medical treatment or evacuation, nor any plan for the handling of prisoners of war.⁶⁶ As a result, in the initial assault some medical supplies were left behind and plasma and morphine had to be taken from the nearby medical school.

The joint battle staff and JTF commander were not networked during this joint operation. With a faulty intelligence foundation and lacking a shared vision of the theater, joint forces attacked the island of Grenada in a slow methodical manner by “piecemealing the deployment of forces.”⁶⁷ This denied the JTF commander freedom of action and prevented a violent strike of joint combat power on the operational objective. This failure manifested itself in two other critical instances. The lack of common radio frequencies prevented coordination between Army units and Navy and

Marine aircraft. As a result, Navy air strikes were delivered against Army positions and enemy elements were able to withdraw unmolested by aircraft.⁶⁸

Operation Urgent Fury was a success. This success could only be attributed to the disparity in manpower and firepower between JTF 120 and the hostile forces on Grenada. The numerous fratricides caused by decoupling between the joint battle staff and commander attempting to exercise command and control clearly illustrates that this joint operation was not conducted without operational failures. The cited operational decoupling and failures can be directly attributed to ineffective networking of the JTF command structure, inadequate information flow and poor functioning of the JTF battle staff as a team. The pattern of operational shortcomings which emerged from Operations Eagle Claw and Urgent Fury would eventually draw the attention of the U. S. Congress.

The next two operations examined were conducted after passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. The Goldwaters -Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 was passed by Congress to address previous shortcomings in the employment of US Armed Forces in joint operations. Specifically, the legislation focused on providing guidance on the integration of air, ground and naval forces as a unified force. Although these operations illustrated vast improvements in JTF operations, the disturbing trends continued to manifest themselves in portions of these joint operations. Operation Just Cause was the first joint operation to be conducted under this new legislation.

OPERATION JUST CAUSE : THE INVASION OF PANAMA

On the afternoon of 15 December 1989, “Manuel Noriega gave a vitriolic anti- American speech after the Panamanian legislature declared him head of state.”⁶⁹ The following day, he declared himself “maximum leader” of Panama after usurping the democratic process. Predictably, the country edged toward complete breakdown. The following night US Marine Lieutenant Robert Paz was shot and killed at a PDF road block while a Navy lieutenant and his wife were detained and

abused at another road block elsewhere in Panama.⁷⁰ Based on instability and the threat to the Panama Canal and US citizens, President Bush gave the execute order to invade Panama at 0045 hours 20 December 1989.

The mission of the JTF was to secure the Panama Canal and US installations, neutralize the Panamanian Defense force and restore democracy to the region with minimal causalities. This operation was so successful that within 14 days Noriega surrendered and the combat phase of the operation was over. The invasion conducted by the JTF was characterized by “simultaneity”... “the generation of simultaneous effects that combined to create overwhelming and focused combat power relative to the enemy sources of power.”⁷¹

The success of this operation can be attributed to the smooth transition and infusion between planning staffs, time available, the presence of forces in theater, and their ability to conduct rehearsals and joint training in the area of operations prior to the commencement of hostilities. The XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters was selected as the core component to establish JTF Panama. It was augmented by additional service component staff officers to assist in the employment of joint assets in a predominantly ground oriented campaign. These planners frequently traveled to Panama to discuss the current situation and make recommendations for changes to the plan as needed.⁷² Several battle staff planners were pre-positioned in Panama prior to the assault, which also aided in the successful entry of the JTF.

Despite the fact Operation Just Cause was a clear operational success, there are issues of decoupling which warrant review. The first was the failure of the JTF command to focus combat power effectively in key sectors. For example, attacks on the *Commandancia* failed due to errors in intelligence and coordination by the battle staff.⁷³ Secondly, the JTF battle staff did not always have a clear image of the area of operations which resulted in a “reading of the battlefield which was slow and always out of date.”⁷⁴ Finally, and most importantly, the JTF battle staff did not plan for the restoration of the Endara government upon the cessation of combat, nor for the retraining of the PDF

infrastructure to provide local security. The absence of a post conflict plan resulted in massive looting and a collapse of the Panamanian infrastructure. As a result, the unexpected civil unrest caused a pause in joint operations while the JTF tried to figure out what to do.⁷⁵ This operational pause could have been avoided had the JTF battle staff interacted with the appropriate governmental agencies to plan for such a transition.

OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY

On 18 September 1994, Operation Uphold Democracy was executed to restore civil order and assist in the transition of Haiti to a democratic government. This joint operation was conducted within the US Atlantic Command (USACOM) area of responsibility with the “mission to rapidly project power of the US military to reinstate the ousted Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.”⁷⁶

On the evening of 18 September 1994, airborne, amphibious and special operations forces were enroute to Haiti to execute a “forced entry operation”. “At 2000 hours President Clinton called off the invasion as diplomatic efforts had swayed the military triumvirate running Haiti to reinstate President Aristide.”⁷⁷ This cancellation of combat operations required the JTF to transition to a non-combat operation in less than 24 hours. JTF elements which previously would have seized objectives now found themselves required to contract for the same land space with host nation representatives prior to occupation. On the following morning, US JTF elements began a permissive entry into Haiti by amphibious and air mobile means.

As planned, this operation initially consisted of two JTFs. Joint Task Force 180 was formed around XVIII Airborne Corps with the mission of executing a forced entry operation and JTF 190 formed around the Army’s 10th Mountain Division with the mission of executing a semi-permissive administrative entry. These plans called for JTF 180 to be headquartered aboard the USS Mount Whitney or ashore in Port au Prince, and for JTF 190 to be shore based.⁷⁸ As the operation unfolded and the situation changed, a combination of these plans was executed from joint command posts involving commanders with joint battle staffs afloat and ashore. As the method of entry changed for

the joint operation, the decision was made to consolidate the JTFs under the command and control of JTF 180 and redesignate the commander of 10th Mountain Division as the land forces commander for the operation.

This operation was also characterized by adaptive force packaging. This concept of force building involves the mixing and matching of service component forces to achieve the correct combination of joint combat power necessary to accomplish the assigned mission. This concept was illustrated by many joint "firsts" accomplished during this operation. For instance, this was the first joint operation in which "a Navy aircraft carrier was used as an Army force projection platform and JTF command control was positioned aboard the USS Mount Whitney."⁷⁹ This force packaging reduced security requirements for the JTF and provided the JTF commander with greater freedom of action to conduct the operation.

The success of this joint operation can be attributed to the smooth transition from forced entry to permissive entry by the JTF, well developed joint battle staff teams, the selection of an army corps as the overall JTF core component, and the numerous rehearsals and exercises conducted by elements of the JTF prior to September 1994.

The smooth transition of operations from forced entry to permissive entry by the JTF was possible due to adaptive force packaging. This concept "allowed the JTF to change the plan in midair."⁸⁰ This flexibility was designed into the plan by anticipating change. The assembled joint battle staff had prepared to conduct the worst case scenario, but they also prepared several branches and sequels with the appropriate joint forces as they realized that things might not go as anticipated.⁸¹

Secondly, the joint battle staff within the JTF was a well developed team. Each of the members had previously worked together and had established internal standard operating procedures by which to share information both in planning and executing joint operations.⁸² In fact USACOM credits much of the intelligence success in Haiti to the common staff documents used by the battle

staff like, i.e. the “intelligence cookbook”, to standardize staff procedures.⁸³ Additionally, the USACOM joint staff augmentees remained the same from mission inception to completion. These joint battle staff members thoroughly planned, exercised and rehearsed this operation as a team prior to execution. This was a significant change from previous JTF operations conducted by US armed forces.

The core components of the two JTFs were built around an Army corps (JTF 180) and an Army division (JTF 190). This method of JTF development facilitated the employment of joint assets in a primarily ground oriented campaign. However, with the change in mission, USACOM thoughtfully chose to unite the operational command and control under JTF 180 as the CJTF. The advantage of using this method, with XVIII Airborne Corps as the CJTF, was the existing command relationship between the XVIII Airborne Corps commander and his joint battle staff with 10th Mountain Division. The pre-existing relationship between the JTF commander and his staff facilitated the building of a shared image of the area of operations. This connectivity was based on the existing staff processes of the core component. The procedures were familiar to both commander and staff and those selected to fill joint positions. Additionally, each of the joint battle staff augmentees from USACOM had previously trained and established working relationships with this headquarters and understood the commander’s operational vision of the battlefield. Thus, the sharing of a mutual battlefield image assured the networking of the JTF commander and his battle staff prior to mission execution.

JTF 180 conducted exercises and rehearsals with its components prior to execution. It is clear from the Haiti experience that theater augmentation for training, rehearsals and exercises paid great operational dividends in that joint battle staff teams assembled in the JTF were well suited for this operation. For example, Ocean Venture 93, rehearsed the very same joint operating procedures which were adopted and used during Uphold Democracy.⁸⁴

Despite the fact that Operation Uphold Democracy was an operational success, there were instances of operational decoupling. This decoupling occurred in planning, logistics and engineer operations. The decoupling in this operation caused an operational pause during the initial days of the operation after the entry method into Haiti was changed.

Planning for the initial operations in Haiti was characterized by compartmentalization. Although limited access to information for forced entry operations is normal, the extent to which it was compartmentalized adversely affected planning in the areas of logistics, engineer operations, land management and detailed planning for the permissive entry option.⁸⁵ The effects of this compartmentalization were only compounded when the decision was made to shift the mission to a permissive entry operation as all planning assumptions made for follow-on engineer and logistic forces were invalidated.

Unlike forced entry operations, permissive entry operations required the coordination for and contracting of land and facilities in order to establish initial bases for force lodgment. The contracting and coordination for such resources would normally be conducted with the host nation prior to entry. In this situation, with a last minute change in entry methods, “the assumption that follow on forces would occupy their previously planned positions was invalidated.”⁸⁶ Deploying forces were forced to contract for facilities while simultaneously deploying into Haiti. This resulted in an operational pause as occupying forces were placed together into congested positions each attempting to establish initial command and control while simultaneously executing their portion of the operation.⁸⁷

The change in entry methods also created decoupling in the arrival of follow on units and equipment. The initial time phased force deployment list (TPFDL) was designed to support a forced entry operation. Little flexibility was built into this part of the plan for alternative entry options and as a result, an operational pause occurred for approximately three days as the follow on flow of joint forces and equipment was adjusted to support the operation. The decoupling caused by the

equipment prepositioned afloat could not be avoided, but the holding of aircraft in reserve for contingencies associated with airborne forces could have been better synchronized by the joint battle staff to support the permissive entry option.⁸⁸

Operation Uphold Democracy demonstrates that engineers need to be represented as a separate entity in a JTF headquarters.⁸⁹ Joint doctrine portrays the engineer function of construction and facilities as a subordinate element of the J-4. However, engineers assigned to a JTF are focused on providing mobility and survivability to the joint force. As such, the engineer function must be represented as a primary on the JTF battle staff in order to facilitate effective staff interaction. The effective integration of the engineer function into a JTF battle staff will assure mutual situational awareness of the battlefield. The JTF 190 staff evolved to reflect this fact as the engineer brigade attached to the JTF eventually provided a joint staff cell distinct from the J4 section to meet these joint engineering requirements.⁹⁰

Uphold Democracy was without question the most successful joint operation conducted to date. It was characterized by adaptable force packaging which gave the JTF commander greater flexibility in executing different entry options as the situation changed. It was also characterized by a well developed joint battle staff team which interactively shared information and maintained a well developed shared image of the battlefield with the JTF commander. In fact, the JTF commander was acutely aware of the situation on September 18 and 19 as decisions were made to launch the kick-in-the door operation, then halt the invasion, and finally to switch to the soft landing.⁹¹ This can be directly attributed to the core component method used to develop the JTF, the battle staff teams and the exercises and rehearsals conducted prior to execution which collectively facilitated the high level of connectivity within the JTF headquarters. Even though there was minor decoupling causing an initial operational pause in operations, these successes warrant close attention and documentation as joint doctrine if future joint operations are to be as successful.

This evolutionary perspective illustrates a continuing trend of decoupling within JTF headquarters during joint operations. This trend also shows the missed operational opportunities and failures which occur when the joint battle staff and commander are decoupled and do not share the same operational image of joint operations. The use of interactive information flow and teamwork within a JTF headquarters ensures greater connectivity between the commander and the joint staff which when incorporated together within the organization can reduce uncertainty and ensure the decisive use of joint combat power.

IV BUILDING A SHARED IMAGE OF THE JOINT THEATER

Today's battlefield is characterized by fast moving forces and rapidly changing situations in a complex environment. This environment, when coupled with advancing technologies, will have a great impact on the acquisition, processing and dissemination of information by JTF command posts. This became evident to our armed forces during Operation Desert Storm. The use of advanced technologies and the use of joint and combined assets brought about a swift and decisive victory over the forces of Iraq. "Never before has the need for horizontal and vertical sharing of information on the battlefield been more critical."⁹² Today one of the greatest challenges that a joint battle staff faces is the management of increased volumes of information flowing into the command post. The performance of this common staff function has the most significant impact on the commander's ability to make sound operational decisions. By processing this information accurately and developing a picture of the battlefield through effective information sharing and interactive information flow, the battle staff is capable of assisting the commander in focusing joint combat power decisively.

INTERACTIVE INFORMATION FLOW

The commander and joint battle staff each seek a dynamic image of the area of operations that will enable them to effectively focus the combined capabilities of the joint force assembled. This image is the commander's and staff's "mental model"⁹³ of the operational theater. This image is not merely a depiction, but the commander's and staff's understanding of the battlefield situation as well as their projected futures, which rest on friendly and enemy possible actions.⁹⁴ The meaning of any information received by the battle staff is driven by this image and its value is determined by how it fits into this image. Thus, in order for the staff and commander to be networked, they both must share the same image and understand the information needs necessary to resource it.

The commander defines an initial image of the operational theater through his intent. Once this is relayed to and understood by the staff they have a "shared image". This image is further

refined through an interactive flow of shared information within the joint command post. This picture may easily become distorted if the staff misinterprets the intent, the intent is ambiguous or if the flow of information fails to be a source of staff interaction. Any of these three instances can cause decoupling and the projection of a distorted image of the operational theater. This distorted depiction of the area of operations thus prevents the effective use of the assembled joint force by the JTF commander and staff.

To effectively develop images, the commander and staff must actively share information. Information requirements not only include **content** but also the **flow** of information. Joint doctrine, like the service doctrines, views the flow of information from the traditional linear approach during decision making and execution of operations. The traditional linear approach portrays the flow of information from staff and subordinate to the commander, who in turn provides each with decisions. “A better model of information flow, and one that is closer to reality in well functioning command posts, is an interactive - one in which the passage of information is accomplished by feedback for the assessment of understanding.”⁹⁵

In interactive information flow each transmission of information is part of a feedback loop between members of the command structure. This systems approach to information flow facilitates the lateral, vertical and horizontal flow of information while simultaneously allowing each battle staff member to experience and understand staff interrelationships. Even though the staff is often functionally partitioned so that members can focus on their respective service functions, it cannot effectively operate without this type of dialogue.⁹⁶ The interactive flow of information is necessary to shape an image of the battlefield. In forming this image, it is important for the commander to know that his image of the battlefield is understood.⁹⁷ Consequently, when interactive information flow is not employed by a command structure key information is overlooked and the recognition of emergency situations and operational opportunities lags behind the impact of the actual events. This

organizational dysfunctionality precludes the JTF commander and battle staff from developing a shared image of the operational theater. Thus, when the commander and battle staff are of one mind they are networked in their efforts in employing the joint capabilities of the JTF.

Interactive information flow can occur in many different ways. The traditional military method is through back-briefings, or repeating back what was heard. In other forums a question and answer session may occur. In this instance the commander may be verifying that a staff member or subordinate shares the same operational image. However, the most effective way is one in which the flow of information is free and unrestricted.⁹⁸ The relatively unstructured continuous flow of information among battle staff members and the commander constitutes interactive information flow. This interactive flow of information ensures the commander and staff are networked by sharing the same operational image.

The linear approach described in joint and service doctrine encourages the compartmentalization of information by battle staff and service function within a JTF headquarters. Both current and emerging doctrine do little to explain the requirement for the interactive flow or sharing of information within the JTF headquarters. Without an interactive flow of information across the service functions of the JTF headquarters, the staff cannot perform effectively as a team and answer the information needs of the commander. In that case, as illustrated in the historical examples, decoupling occurs within the JTF command structure resulting operational failure or missed opportunities.

When a command structure emphasizes the interactive flow of information, the staff constantly interacts. "They monitor, analyze and plan, pushing extraordinary information at fellow staff officers and demanding information from their peers that they need in order to develop and retain an image of the operational theater."⁹⁹ As a result the foundation is established upon which the JTF command structure can develop into a cohesive organization....a team.

TEAMWORK

Joint Task Force operations are characterized by a mixture of deployed forces and staffs assembled to meet the requirements presented by the diverse number of missions within the continuum of war. To span this continuum, the JTF must have an effective joint battle staff to support the commander in the execution of these operations. To support the JTF commander the battle staff must operate as a team.¹⁰⁰

JTF command posts are organizational structures designed to operate effectively during emergency situations. The efficient functioning of the command post is critical in any combat operation.¹⁰¹ As the core element of this organizational structure, the joint battle staff must operate as a team to facilitate the effective operation of this organization within an environment characterized by a continuous flow of uncertainty. "Teamwork is defined as activities performed by team members in such a manner that each activity is coordinated with every other and contributes to superordinate goals of the unit or supports the activities of other members."¹⁰² Teamwork within a battle staff provides the foundation upon which team decision making can occur.

A team consists of at least two people, who are working toward a common goal, objective, or mission, where each has been assigned specific roles or functions to perform and where the completion of any mission requires some form of dependency among the group members.¹⁰³ The battle staff is such a team. The various members are working toward an endstate established by the commander. To accomplish this endstate each member performs functions within their respective service function or operating system to assist the commander in focusing combat power. Finally, each member of the battle staff relies upon other members to synchronize joint operations through cooperation and coordination of their respective systems.

The battle staff performs several common functions. These functions include: 1) solving operational problems and supervising ongoing operations; 2) making decisions; 3) monitoring activities; 4) coordinating and integrating activities so that they contribute efficiently to unit's

objectives; and, 5) coordinating activities with higher and adjacent units.¹⁰⁴ Although staff responsibilities are delineated by service function, each member must coordinate actions which overlap these functions as a team in order to execute assigned missions effectively. Thus, to function effectively as a team, it is critical that the battle staff members within the command post be similarly trained and have a common understanding of the operation.¹⁰⁵

Various factors contribute to the development of teams and team relationships among the members of an organization. "Common membership in a particular unit, the possession of a common terminology, the sharing of a common doctrine, common problems with regard to the current operational situation of the unit and common understanding of its significance, the possession of common means and channels of communication, the fact of frequent association and shared values regarding the necessity for working as a team...these are all factors which enhance the development of teamwork."¹⁰⁶

Unfortunately, the presence of all or several of these factors will not assure effective teamwork. Dr. Olmstead, in his study Battle Staff Integration, identifies three determinants of teamwork. These determinants are "1) superordinate objectives which are meaningful, clear and desired by all, 2) a system of potential rewards for contributing to team effort and 3) an organizational system which provides effective operating procedures and efficient patterns of communication among members."¹⁰⁷

"Superordinate objectives are those goals which are equally compelling for all and cannot be ignored, but which cannot be achieved by the efforts of one individual or group alone."¹⁰⁸ Superordinate objectives are those which a joint task force establishes to accomplish the assigned mission. To accomplish these objectives, coordination among members of the organization is essential. Teamwork depends upon the recognition, acceptance and commitment by each member of the battle staff to achieving these objectives.¹⁰⁹ Unclear objectives result in poor coordination among the battle staff and the non-synchronization of joint force capabilities.

A system of rewards fosters teamwork and cooperation. "Cooperation is most likely to develop when members can receive significant satisfaction from behaving cooperatively and where competitive behavior is not rewarded."¹¹⁰ The use of rewards within a battle staff should focus on rewarding the group for forward progress as opposed to the rewarding of an individual for achievement of personal goals. This system encourages motivation on a collective level within the staff which is essential for establishing a team.

"No matter how high the motivation to cooperate and coordinate, teamwork will not result unless member efforts are effectively channeled."¹¹¹ Thus, the development of an effective team requires an organizational system which provides a means by which the efforts of the team may be coordinated and structured. An organizational system "refers to those practices and procedures used to perform such functions as giving direction, assigning responsibilities, exchanging information, making decisions and coordinating within a battle staff."¹¹² This system must insure that each battle staff member is provided the appropriate information, guidance and support necessary for them to perform their roles effectively both individually within their functional area and collectively as a team.

A final aspect of teamwork is cohesion. Cohesion is "the willingness of group members to work together toward a common goal, to overcome frustrations or endure pain to accomplish that goal."¹¹³ In order for a joint battle staff to develop and perform as an effective team, cohesion must exist within the group. Due to the ad hoc nature of JTF staffs, cohesion is often difficult to attain. However, by establishing common objectives and an environment of cooperative interaction through interactive information flow the joint headquarters can develop into a networked organization. This cooperative interaction is facilitated by augmenting the JTF with staff officers with previous joint experience. Shared joint experiences serve two important purposes. They permit personnel to become familiar with each other and their ways of working while simultaneously providing them a common frame of reference for problem solving as a team.¹¹⁴

Observations from previous JTF operations indicate that the majority of joint battle staffs are not teams at all. Rather they are collections of individual relationships in which each subordinate concerns himself only with his own service function or operating system.¹¹⁵ Under these conditions, networking is impossible. As a result the joint battle staff is unable to produce products with sufficient detail to synchronize the execution of joint operations. In many instances subsequent refinement is done in relative isolation by individual staff members which in turn negatively impacts on synchronization and development of shared situational awareness of the battlefield.¹¹⁶ Finally, the concept of teamwork must be adopted as a common staff function in joint doctrine in order for the JTF commander and staff to develop a shared situational awareness of the area of operations. The doctrinal incorporation, training and exercising of battle staff members and perspective joint augmentees in teamwork and team decision making prior to the creation of a JTF will facilitate the synchronization of joint operations by networking the commander and staff.

TEAM DECISION MAKING

To meet the demands of current force projection operations with multi-service force readiness, the JTF must, therefore, be a war fighting and team building organization.¹¹⁷ To accomplish this, JTFs are formed around existing component organizations with service augmentation. This method of organization attempts to provide an environment in which the efforts of the assembled joint staff may be coordinated and structured. Unfortunately, the ad hoc nature of the JTF organization as a mix and match solution to a national crisis does not always result in a totally integrated team. This is due to the fact that the JTF command team is not together very long and does not have time to come “up to speed”.¹¹⁸ This means that perspective members of a JTF headquarters must be trained in team decision making prior to joining a JTF headquarters. This can be accomplished by identifying perspective joint battle staff members for future contingencies, as was done for Uphold Democracy, and providing them with team training prior to any crisis response operation. These teams can then formulate standard operating procedures and test them through

realistic joint exercises such as Ocean Venture. Only through actual rehearsal of battle staff procedures during realistic exercises, with actual counterparts, can the JTF develop the cohesion and mutual trust necessary for an effective functioning joint battle staff.¹¹⁹ This cohesion and mutual trust is further developed by a CJTF who creates a command climate which supports team building. Thus, when building his staff the CJTF should select a deputy and chief of staff well versed in these concepts to ensure the staff and commander remain networked. Finally, for the JTF headquarters to be fully integrated and networked it must be created from a group of service members who share joint experiences and a common model of team decision making.

A model for team decision making provides the basis from which JTF organizations can be networked through a common doctrinal procedure and thus achieve mutual situation awareness of the operational theater. This model consists of three levels: team identity, conceptual level and self monitoring. Each of these levels of the model can be easily learned through training and used to illustrate what a team is doing and how it can help itself improve in performance.

The first four elements are focused at team identity : defining roles and functions, engaging, compensating and avoiding micromanagement. In an organization such as a JTF, the command and staff team must educate each member in their own job and function , as well as the roles and functions of others.¹²⁰ Team members need to be engaged in the actions of the planning team. This is facilitated by the interactive flow of information across service functions void of compartmentalization. An effective joint battle staff team compensates for its members. When a fellow staff member “notices that team members are becoming overloaded, that member steps in to help resolve the issue.”¹²¹ Finally an effective command team avoids micromanagement. A decentralized approach to command and staff actions by the commander during a crisis allows subordinates to take action without over supervision.

The conceptual level of the model consists of the following four elements: envisioning goals and plans, focusing on time horizon and range factors, detecting gaps and ambiguity, and achieving

situation assessment by diverging and converging. As mentioned previously in the discussion on teamwork, goals enable the battle staff team to understand what the organization is trying to accomplish. The battle staff team must also be focused in its efforts. Focusing can be accomplished by focusing on the time horizon or by considering a range of factors. “Many ineffective staff teams concentrate on immediate events and no one looks to the long range consequences or implications.”¹²² This was evident in the joint operation conducted during Operation Just Cause. Additionally, a team which maintains a time horizon balance between present and future activities can more effectively maintain an image of the operational theater. Teams must also be versatile and focus on a range of factors impacting the operation during planning and execution. Those who fixate on a single perspective often overlook operational opportunities and are unable to maintain a shared image. A shared image with the commander is critical to the successful execution of joint operations. To achieve mutual situational awareness, an effective battle staff team must be able to detect gaps and ambiguity in the theater picture. This is accomplished by the “team encouraging differing opinions and then converging on a commonly understood assessment” through an interactive flow of information.¹²³

Self monitoring is focused on adjusting and time management. An effective battle staff team is flexible and is able to adjust through self monitoring to keep the organization on its chosen direction. Finally, effective decision making teams “know when to cut off discussions or set up parallel efforts to conserve time during decision making.”¹²⁴

The JTF is an assembled team of joint capabilities established to respond to a national crisis. To be successful, the commander and staff of this organization must be networked through a shared image of the operational theater. This can only be achieved through an interactive flow of information and a command structure based on teamwork. Thus, the team decision making model fits into this framework and should be incorporated into joint doctrine and training in order to facilitate the future employment of Joint Task Forces by our nation.

V CONCLUSION

"Separate ground, sea, and air warfare is gone forever. If ever again we should be involved in war, we will fight it in all elements, with all services, as one single concentrated effort."

Dwight D. Eisenhower

The purpose of this monograph was to examine the problem of decoupling between the commander and joint battle staff of a joint task force. As a result of this research, several conclusions may be drawn. The JTF command structure, consisting of commander and joint battle staff, is that element which exercises command and control in employing the joint capabilities of a JTF. Due to the nature of modern warfare, each operational commander will always encounter some degree of uncertainty when making decisions. Through the interactive flow of information and teamwork the JTF command structure can reduce uncertainty and be networked through a mutually shared image of the operational theater.

Standing up a JTF for a national crisis will always lead to the development of an organization of an ad hoc nature. Be that as it may, this monograph has offered a possible solution to counter the effects of this approach. Building upon a service component core is the preferred method for designing a JTF headquarters; however, there is no single joint standard to accomplish this. This monograph has illustrated several different approaches to this method and recommends that joint doctrine adopt the operational planning cell model currently used by USPACOM. This model facilitates the interactive flow of information and teamwork by infusing a joint planning cell and augmentees into the JTF headquarters responsible directly to the CJTF. The integration of this planning cell into the JTF joint battle staff ensures that all planning efforts are networked with the CJTF and that there are no distractions by the higher headquarters which may decouple this relationship.

To be networked, the commander and joint battle staff must share a mutual image of the theater of operations in order to focus joint capabilities effectively. Using the previously

recommended model without incorporating the interactive flow of information and teamwork would continue to result in missed operational opportunities and failure. Neither the commander nor staff could hope to achieve a shared image under these conditions. JTF command structures must break away from the linear mode of passing information and adopt an interactive approach. By doing so the command structure will avoid overlooking key information indicating emergency situations and operational opportunities.

Joint doctrine and training must also adopt teamwork as a common staff function. When established, a JTF headquarters must be created from a group of service members who share joint experiences and a common model for team decision making. The team decision making model was introduced by this monograph as a means through which an ad hoc organization assembled in a short period of time may achieve mutual situational awareness.

History has shown that the success of modern joint operations is directly dependent upon the effectiveness of the commander and joint battle staff as a team. The mutual sharing of an image of the operational theater ensures that the joint capabilities of a JTF are used efficiently and effectively. Mutual situational awareness cannot be achieved without an interactive flow of information and teamwork within a JTF headquarters. Thus, through the use of teamwork and an interactive flow of information, an ad hoc organization can avoid operational failure and missed opportunities as the commander and staff become networked through a shared image of the operational theater.

ENDNOTES

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² Ibid. , 2-14.

³ Ibid. , 2-14.

⁴ Ibid. , 2-14.

⁵ Susan P. Kellet-Forsyth, MAJ., USA., Commander's Critical Information Requirements: The Key to a Commander's Battle Image (Fort Leavenworth, KS: United States Army Command and Staff College, December 1993), 1.

⁶ Bruce W. Menning, Bayonets Before Bullets, The Imperial Russian Army, 1861-1914 (Bloomington, MN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 235.

⁷ James P. Kahan, Understanding Commander's Information Need (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Arroyo Center, 1989), 19.

⁸ Ibid. , vi.

⁹ Ibid. , vii.

¹⁰ Joint Chiefs of Staff, J7, "Teamwork is the Key." Defense (Special Issue 1992): 32.

¹¹ The American Heritage Dictionary , rev. ed. (1975), s. v. "teamwork."

¹² John R. Ballard, "JTF Operational Synchronization." Military Review (March-April 1995) : 98.

¹³ U. S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-00.2 Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures (Washington, D. C. : National Defense University Press, 1991): II-1.

¹⁴ Ibid. , II-6.

¹⁵ Terry J. McKearney, "Rethinking the Joint Task Force." Proceedings, U. S. Naval Institute (November 1994) : 55.

¹⁶ John R. Ballard, "JTF Operational Synchronization." Military Review (March - April 1995): 98.

¹⁷ Woody Aurentz LTC., USA. Forming a Joint Task Force. (Ft. Monroe, VA: JTF Training Division, USCINCAFCOM ,1995): Slides 14-15.

¹⁸ Ibid., Slide 15.

¹⁹ US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-00.2 Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1991) : IV-1.

²⁰ Ibid. , IV-1.

²¹ Ibid. , IV-1.

²² Ibid. , IV-3.

²³ Ibid. , IV-4.

²⁴ Ibid. , IV-4.

²⁵ Ibid. , IV-4.

²⁶ Ballard, 99.

²⁷ Ibid. , 99.

²⁸ Headquarters U. S. European Command, Joint Task Force Staff Officer's Brain Book (Stuttgart, GE: USEUCOM, April ,1993) : 6.

²⁹ Joseph A. Olmstead, Battle Staff Integration (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analysis, 1992) : X-8. Teamness is that organizational condition existing within a group in which activities performed by group members are coordinated with every other one and contribute to the superordinate goals of the unit or supports the activities of other members.

³⁰ Aurentz, slide 9.

³¹ Headquarters U. S. European Command, 6.

³² US Atlantic Command, Deployable Task Force 140 Cadre (DJTF-140C) : Standing Operating Procedures (Final Draft) (Norfolk, VA: USACOM, 1993) : I-1.

³³ Aurentz, slide 9.

³⁴ Headquarters U. S. European Command, 7.

³⁵ Ibid. , 8.

³⁶ Ibid. , 9.

³⁷ Michael Pasquarette, COL, USA, interview by LTC Gary G. Sauer, 6 February 1996, phone interview, Joint Battle Staffs of JTFs and Unified Commands, US Army War College, Carlisle, PA.

³⁸ Ibid. , phone interview 6 February 1996.

³⁹ US Atlantic Command, I-2.

⁴⁰ Ibid. , I-2.

⁴¹ Ibid. , I-2.

⁴² Ibid. , I-3.

⁴³ Martin Van Creveld, Command in War. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989): 75. “To guard against danger and keep subordinates on their toes, a commander needs to have in addition a kind of directed telescope -the metaphor- -which he can direct, at will , at any part of the enemy’s forces, the terrain, or his own army in order to bring in information that is not only less structured than that passed on by normal channels but also tailored to meet his momentary (and specific) needs.”

⁴⁴ Pasquarette, phone interview 6 February 1996.

⁴⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, J-7 “Teamwork is the Key” Defense (Special Issue 1992) : 31.

⁴⁶ McKearney, 57.

⁴⁷ Steven L. Canby, “Roles, Missions, and JTFs: Unintended Consequences.” Joint Forces Quarterly (Autumn/Winter 1994-95) : 68.

⁴⁸ Richard A. Gabriel, Military Incompetence: Why the American Military Doesn’t Win. (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1985) : 85.

⁴⁹ Ibid. , 86.

⁵⁰ Ibid. , 86.

⁵¹ Ibid. , 87.

⁵² Holloway Commission , “ The Holloway Report : Iran Rescue Mission #3” Aviation Week and Space Technology (29 September 1980) : 91.

⁵³ Gabriel, 103.

⁵⁴ Ibid. , 107.

⁵⁵ Ibid. , 107.

⁵⁶ Holloway Commission, 140.

⁵⁷ Gabriel, 97.

⁵⁸ Ibid. , 98.

⁵⁹ Ibid. , 103-104.

⁶⁰ Ibid. , 149.

⁶¹ Scott A. Berg, Introduction to Command and Control and Communications (C3) Through Comparative Case Analysis (Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School, 1990): 71.

⁶² Michael J. Byron, “ Fury From the Sea: Marines in Grenada.” U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings (May 1984): 119.

⁶³ Mark Adkin, Urgent Fury: The Battle for Grenada (Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1989) : 309.

⁶⁴ Ibid. , 126-127, 131-132.

⁶⁵ Gabriel, 173.

⁶⁶ Colonel Jerome G. Edwards and LTC Michael A. Anastasio, "Grenada Joint Logistical Insights for 'No-Plan' Operations," National Security Discussion Paper, (Harvard University, 1989): 18.

⁶⁷ Gabriel, 175.

⁶⁸ Ibid. , 178.

⁶⁹ Lawrence A. Yates, "Joint Task Force Panama Just Cause Before and After." Military Review (October 1991): 70.

⁷⁰ Ibid. , 70.

⁷¹ Maxwell R. Thurman and William Hartzog. "Simultaneity the Panama Case." Army (November 1993): 16.

⁷² J. T. Jackson, Just Cause: Some Lessons Learned (U. S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 1992) : 20.

⁷³ John G. Roos, "Few Lessons Were Learned In Panama Invasion." Armed Forces Journal International (June 1993) : 56.

⁷⁴ Ibid. , 56.

⁷⁵ Ibid. , 56.

⁷⁶ Patricia Hollis, "Projecting America'a Military Might." Field Artillery (April 1995): 6.

⁷⁷ Ibid. , 6.

⁷⁸ Thomas R. Wilson, "Joint Intelligence and Uphold Democracy." Joint Forces Quarterly (Spring 1995) :55.

⁷⁹ U. S. Department of the Army Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL). Operation Uphold Democracy: Initial Impressions (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U. S. Combined Arms Command, December 1994) : i.

⁸⁰ Hollis, 7.

⁸¹ Ibid., 7.

⁸² Louis Speerl, LTC. USA, USCGSC CDD. Operation Uphold Democracy. Interview by author 28 February 1996, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

⁸³ Wilson, 56.

⁸⁴ Ibid. , 58.

⁸⁵U. S. Department of the Army Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), ii.

⁸⁶ Ibid. , iii.

⁸⁷ Ibid. , iii.

⁸⁸ Ibid. , v.

⁸⁹ Ibid. , vii.

⁹⁰ Ibid. , vii.

⁹¹ Wilson, 59.

⁹² Jimmy D. Ross, "Winning the Information War." Army (February 1994): 27.

⁹³ Peter Senge, The Fifth Discipline (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1994): 8. Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action.

⁹⁴ James P. Kahan, Understanding Commander's Information Needs (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Arroyo Center, 1989): vi.

⁹⁵ Ibid. , vii.

⁹⁶ Ibid. , 27.

⁹⁷ Ibid. , 26.

⁹⁸ Calvin, A. H. Waller, LTG. (RET), USA, Command and Organizational Behavior. Interview by author April 1995, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

⁹⁹ Kahan, 27.

¹⁰⁰ U. S. Army TRADOC Pamphlet 525-100-1, Leadership and Command on the Battlefield (Fort Monroe, VA U. S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1992), 19.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. , 25.

¹⁰² Olmstead, X-8.

¹⁰³ Ibid. , IV-4.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. , IV-9.

¹⁰⁵ U. S. Army TRADOC PAM. 525-100-1, 25.

¹⁰⁶ Olmstead, IV-22.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. , IV- 23.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. , IV-24.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. , IV-24.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. , IV-24.

¹¹¹ Ibid. , IV-25.

¹¹² Ibid. , IV-25.

¹¹³ Ibid. , IV-14-15.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. , IV-19.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. , IV-12.

¹¹⁶ U. S. Army Center for Army Lessons Learned, CTC Trends: NTC, 1st Qtr 95 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U. S. Army Combined Arms Command, December 1995), II-28.

¹¹⁷ Cushman,29.

¹¹⁸ Gary A. Klein, Caroline E. Zsambok, and Marvin L. Thordsen, "Team Decision Training Five Myths and a Model." Military Review (April 1993) : 40.

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¹²³ Ibid. , 41.

¹²⁴ Ibid. , 42.

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